

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 01187 241602 Z

41

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ADP-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00

NSCE-00 EB-11 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-09 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-14 OMB-01 RSR-01

/103 W

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O 241425 Z MAR 73

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3544

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SANAA IMMEDIATE

DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

USCINCEUR IMMEDIATE

USAREUR IMMEDIATE

USAFE IMMEDIATE

USNAVEUR IMMEDIATE

CHUSMTM DHAHRAN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 1187

JOINT EMBASSY/ DAO MESSAGE

KUWAIT PASS ABU DHABI, MUSCAT

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

LONDON FOR LAMBRAKIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, MOPS, SA, YS

SUBJ: ALLEGED SOUTH YEMENI AIR ATTACK ON SAUDI OUTPOST

SUMMARY. PRESS REPORTS SAG MINISTRY INTERIOR ANNOUNCEMENT

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PAGE 02 JIDDA 01187 241602 Z

SEVERAL WOUNDED IN ALLEGED PDRY AERIAL ATTACK ON WUDI' AH OUTPOST ( APPROX. 17 DEGREES N 47 DEGREES E) IN VICINITY SAG- PDRY BORDER. SAG ARMED FORCES ON ALERT AND SOME INTERNAL SAUDI AIRWAYS FLIGHTS CANCELLED. LIGHTNINGS POSITIONED AT KHAMIS MUSHAYT. WE UNABLE JUDGE PRECISELY WHAT SAUDIS PLAN TO DO. AMB HAS BEEN ASKED TO SEE ACTING MIN. OF DEFENSE PRINCE TURKI. END SUMMARY.

1. SAG MINISTRY INTERIOR RELEASED FOLLOWING STATEMENT THURSDAY EVENING, QUOTE AT 1630 HOURS THURSDAY 17/2/1393 H. ( MARCH 22, 1973), TWO MIG-17 JET FIGHTERS COMING FROM SOUTH YEMEN RAIDED WUDI' AH POST WITHIN OUR BORDERS WOUNDING SOME INDIVIDUALS. OUR GROUND AIR DEFENSE REPELLED THE TWO AGGRESSIVE PLANES AND COMPELLED THEM TO WITHDRAW. UNQUOTE.

2. DATT SOURCES CONFIRM THAT ROYAL SAUDI AIR FORCE PUT ON 24- HOUR ALERT STATUS EFFECTIVE 1400 HOURS ZULU 22 MARCH (1700 HOURS LOCAL). CIVILIAN CONTRACTORS PROVIDING MAINTENANCE TO RSAF AIRCRAFT WERE DIRECTED BEGINNING 23 MARCH TO OPERATE DOUBLE SHIFTS TO GET AS MANY AIRCRAFT OPERATIONAL AS POSSIBLE IN SHORTEST PERIOD OF TIME. SAUDI AIRLINES CIVILIAN FLIGHTS TO SHARURAH ( MAJOR AIRFIELD 50 KILOMETERS NORTH OF WUDI' AH) HAVE BEEN CANCELLED INDEFINITELY EFFECTIVE 23 MARCH. WE INFORMED SAUDI FLIGHTS TO YEMEN SUSPENDED AS OF 3/24 & ARE CHECKING FURTHER. SAUDI ARMY UNITS IN SOUTH ARE ON FULL ALERT. ALL HAWK MISSILE BATTERIES ARE ON 15- MINUTE ALERT. RSAF C-130 FLIGHTS INTO NAJRAN AND SHARURAH HAVE BEEN INCREASED SIGNIFICANTLY. WE INFORMED ALSO THAT SAUDIS MAY NOW HAVE AS MANY AS 19 LIGHTNING AIRCRAFT BASED AT KHAMIS MUSHAYT. RSAF HAS REJECTED IDEA OF USING F-86' S BUT IS APPARENTLY GIVING THOUGHT TO HOW F-5' S COULD BE BETTER PREPARED FOR POSSIBLE USE.

3. COMMENT: WUDI' AH IS A SAUDI BEDU OUTPOST IN GENERAL VICINITY UNDEFINED SAUDI- PDRY BORDER MOTIVATION BEHIND ATTACK, IF IT IN FACT OCCURRED ( AND WE PRESUME IT DID), MAY PERHAPS BE AS WARNING TO FORESTALL ANY POSSIBLE INCURSIONS INTO PDRY BY RAG- TAG ELEMENTS RECEIVING SOMETIME SUPPORT FROM SAG OR EXILED PARTIZANS FROM SOUTHERN YEMEN. TIMING OF THIS WARNING, HOWEVER, WOULD SEEM PARTICULARLY INOPPORTUNE FROM PDRY VIEWPOINT CONSIDERING MARCH 23 MEETING BETWEEN SAG MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN AND SULTAN QABOOS  
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PAGE 03 JIDDA 01187 241602 Z

OF OMAN. WE UNABLE AT PRESENT MOMENT JUDGE WHAT PRECISELY

SAUDIS MAY INTEND TO DO IN RESPONSE TO ATTACK. MEASURES DESCRIBED ABOVE SEEM TO BE EXPECTABLE REACTIVE ONES, THOUGH HAVING GIVEN MATTER CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY, SAUDIS MAY BE GETTING THEMSELVES INTO POSITION WHERE THEY WILL NEED TO RESPOND OR WILL HAVE TO EXTRACT SOME KIND OF EXPLANATION FROM PDRY.

ACTING DEFENSE MINISTER PRINCE TURKI HAS ASKED TO SEE ME AND WILL TRY TO GET TO RIYADH MARCH 25 WHERE I MAY HAVE OPPORTUNITY URGE A BIT OF CAUTION THOUGH AT SAME TIME MAY EXPECT TO RECEIVE SOME REQUESTS FOR EMERGING ASSISTANCE. THACHER

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SECSTATE WASHDC INFO AMMAN  
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